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TO

DR. AND MRS. WM. H. DAVIS,

OUR BELOVED PASTOR AND WIFE,

THIS SOUVENIR IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

OF

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

REV. WM. H. DAVIS, D.D.

UNIV. OF MICH.

Baron John Ingram

BYZANTINE ART

AND

THE NEW OLD FIRST

ILLUSTRATED

PUBLISHED BY
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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

UNIV. OF MICH.

PREFACE.

✠

"GREAT nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts,—the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art." "The acts of a nation may be triumphant by its good fortune; and its words mighty by the genius of a few of its children; but its art, only *by the general gifts and common sympathies of the race.*" (I have italicized the words to give added emphasis, for want of the rest of Ruskin's preface, which is here omitted.)

"Viva San Marco."

"Viva, Italia!" you may still hear that cry sometimes, though she lies dead enough. "Viva, Vittor, Pisani!" perhaps that cry, yet again. But the answer—"not Pisani, but St. Mark," when will you hear *that* again nowadays?"

"But if you will read it (*i. e.*, St. Mark's and Byzantine art), you must understand now, once for all, the method of utterance in Greek art," etc. "And this is true, not of Byzantine art only, but of all Greek art — pur sang. Let us leave, to-day, the narrow and degrading word 'Byzantine.' There is but one Greek school, from Homer's day down to the Doge Selvo's (1070); and these St. Mark's mosaics are as truly wrought in the power of Dædalus, with the Greek constructive instinct, and in the power of Athena, with the Greek religious soul, as ever chest of Cypselus or shaft of Erechtheum. And therefore, whatever is represented here, be it flower or rock, animal or man, means more than it is in itself. Not sheep, these twelve innocent, woolly things, but the twelve voices of the gospel of heaven; not palm trees, these shafts of shooting stems and beaded fruit—but the living grace of God in the heart, springing up in joy at Christ's coming—not a king merely, this crowned creature in his sworded state, but the justice of God in His eternal law—not a queen, nor a maid only, this Madonna in her purple shade, but the love of God poured forth, in the wonderfulness that passes the love of woman. *She* may forget—yet will I not forget thee." *

* Ruskin's St. Mark's Rest—the *Requiem.*

INTRODUCTION.

✠

RUSKIN truly says, that Art is the *only one* of the three books which gives a true record of a nation's greatness--for Art has been, *and ever will be, the one unfailing, sure, unimpeachable record of the highest types of civilization*—as decadence in Art has marked the decadence of a people– other things pass away, mens' lives, records, traditions, histories, are changeable, perishable; ART, never dies. Time indeed lays its iron hand on Art, and its monuments come down to us (if not destroyed by sacreligious hands), storm-beaten, scarred, dismantled; yet there still remains, that inefficable, glorious element, which reveals to us, a great Art, a great time, a great civilization; and we are awed by, and wonder at, a governing power which is not now rightly understood or appreciated; an intellect too far advanced for us to clearly comprehend, a genius, great as it is lamentably rare in the present age—and we look upon these scarred and battered monuments of ages long ago, grand and beautiful in their noble isolation and contrast with the vain attempts of our own time. And those of us who look beyond the craze of modern materialism, philistinism, and individualism, as opposed to idealism, wonder if America will ever know a "renaissance of Art." Did space allow, I could give sundry weighty reasons why America will never know a truly great art, so long as the present conditions of things exist—so long as our people live only for the non-essentials of life rather than the *essentials*, present materialism rather than future *honor and glory*, realism rather than *idealism*. The close of the nineteenth century does and will show isolated examples of noble art, but as a rule it is utterly impotent in its influence on art, and future centuries will question as to what manner of people we were, as to intellectual growth, art education and comprehension.

II. Ruskin does not mean that a nation is great, in the modern sense, in individual wealth, in broad lands or armed strength; quite the reverse, but great in the higher types of true civilization, in intellectual strength, in national unity for national glory, in *Art*, in *Religion*.

ST. JOHN.

UNIV. OF MICH.

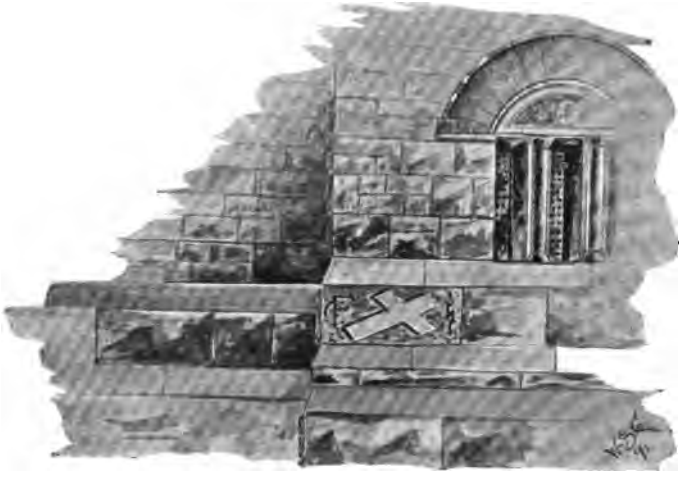
America will have no art worthy of the name, till we, as a people, take on more of the character which made Athens great; Palmyra beautiful; Rome the mistress of the world, and Venice the queen of the seas.

III. Further—art and religion go hand in hand, and in the past, whenever a nation has been truly great it has had a great art, and a deep, strong, vital, influencing religion. And wherever there has been no great art there has been no great religion, and vice-versa. As a nation America has neither art nor religion—in the great sense—and never will have till materialism and philistinism are dead and she inscribes "Viva San Marco" over her doors, and on her banners, and considers ideal honor and glory of more moment than the election of some favorite politician to office, or the rise and fall of stocks.

BYZANTINE ART.

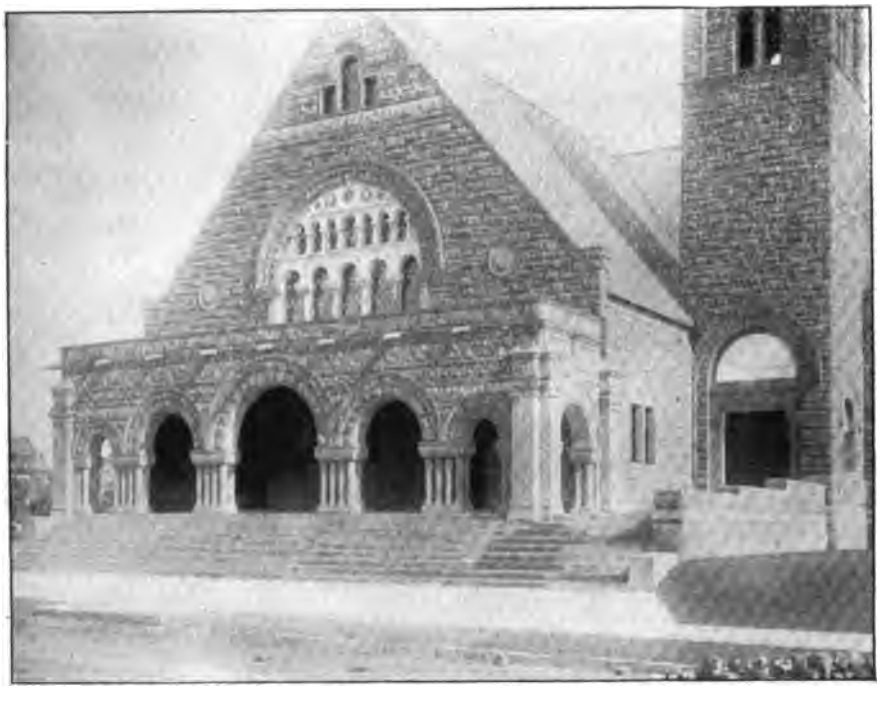
✠

IT has been often asked, why the Byzantine style was chosen for this structure. I will endeavor, briefly, to answer this question. (1) Because I love Byzantine art, more especially as applied to architecture, for, to my mind, it is the only style which the world has ever known, which has all the elements of a strong, healthy, vital, unaffected art, promising more for study and ultimate perfection. (2) Because all other styles have been carried to their ultimate development and perfection. Byzantine art died an untimely end, just as the fair bud was on the point of opening into the perfect flower, and so affords the architect opportunities for new creative work. (3) Because it is essentially a Christian art, native of Judea and of the time of Christ, and was the style employed by the first Christian emperor, in those grand and beautiful buildings erected during his reign. The style was mainly confined to the period from the first to seventh centuries inclusive, but showed spasmodic efforts at revival during the ninth to twelfth centuries inclusive, and was then superseded by Lombard Gothic (or Italian Romanesque) and the Romanesque of the south of France, which grew out of Byzantine.



CORNER STONE AND WINDOW

II. Its elements are, essentially, Greek feeling in the refinement of its motifs, simplicity and directness in its form and structure, with the exotic fragrance of Eastern and Assyrian ornamentation—symbolism, and wealth of color, recognized as an honored element.



FRONT AND LOGGIA.

UNIV. OF MICH.

III. For the general laws of Byzantine art, Ruskin has well set them forth, in Stones of Venice — Vol. II: San Marco, XXX to XLVIII inclusive; but first he says, "If therefore the reader does not care for color, I must protest against his endeavor to form any judgment whatever of this church of St. Mark's. But if he both cares for and loves it, let him remember that the school of incrusted architecture is *the only one in which perfect and permanent chromatic decoration is possible.*" And to these laws of Ruskin, I would add one more, viz., that the decorations must be, generally speaking, surface decoration, i. e., incrusted, included within the form, not boldly applied to, or projecting from it, as in Romanesque or Gothic; in other words, the form must be good in itself, bare of decorations, but when decorated, *must include the decoration*, and decoration is, and should be, a recognized, essential, and honored element of the perfect structure.

SOUTH TRANSEPT WINDOWS.

APPLICATION.

✠

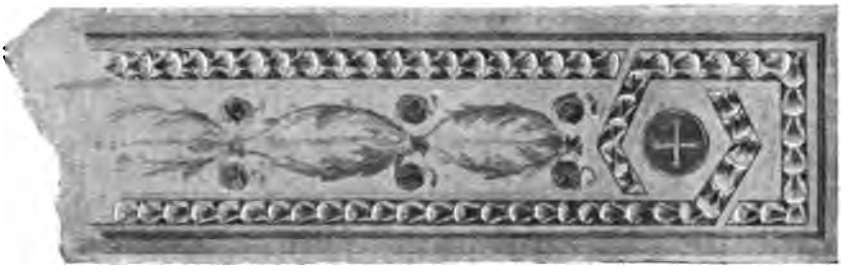
AS regards the application of these laws, in designing and erecting the First Congregational Church, the architect, was, necessarily, forced to take liberties with them, in that we do not, as yet, build churches with vaults and domes, sheath their walls with rare marbles or alabaster, or cover their vaults with mosaics. Besides the utilitarian idea, as regarding the use of a structure of this kind, is too deeply rooted (more the pity, for art's sake) in the minds of the people at the present time, to allow the architect to work out an ideal creation; the architect must needs, therefore, adjust his plan and structural form to the demands of cost, seeing and hearing, and in this case had the pews been placed as they should be, *i. e.*, in regular banks, with those in the transepts at right angles to those in the nave, I could readily forgive all other differences between the committee and myself, which I testify to as having been delightfully few and far between.

II. Another element in Byzantine art, ofttimes born of necessity, and in other cases the spoils of war, was the incorporation of parts of former and older structures into new; so in the present structure, the architect has aimed to give added interest to the whole by the use of motifs, sketched from churches of the early times, and out of the many happy hours spent in studying the edifices of Dalmatia, drifting on the lagoons of Venice, in the solemn and oppressive stillness of Murano or Torcello, or under the spell of the ineffacable charm of St. Mark's Church, or

CHAPEL ENTRANCE.

OF MICH.

wandering amid the deserted streets and churches of fair but sad Ravenna, at Pisa, Florence, Assisi, Rome, or surrounded by all the gorgeous richness of glorious Monreale — holding brush or pencil (in that supposedly warm clime), with fingers too stiff from cold to make work altogether a thing of ease and comfort, he has gathered a motif here, a capital there, a door, an arch, tower, symbol or bit of decoration, to weave into the present edifice, and, in many instances, these are faithful reproductions (in such materials as were at his hands), of a few of the thousand and one gems of Byzantine art. Each and all are old friends, and from out the dim and shadowy ages of the past—through all succeeding centuries —comes to us, the glad refrain, borne by the tiles upon the walls, "Gloria in Excelsis Deo,"—"Peace on Earth,"—"Good will toward men."



SOFFIT OF NAVE ARCH, WEST.

CAPITAL OF COLUMN, CHANCEL ARCH.

III. To those who care to look for such things when traveling in Italy, there will be interest in finding the type of this tower at Jara, Arbe and Jak, in Dalmatia, also at Lucca; the tower door in the Duomo at Pisa; that the west (nave) window resembles the windows in the Piazzetta facade of San Marco; that the transept windows were suggested by one at Jak; that the interior has a striking resemblance to the lower Church of St. Francis, at Assisi; that the general scheme of decorations of the four quarterings of the vault, at the crossings, is like that of the vaulting of the upper Church of St. Francis; that the blue vault and star figuring, is like that in the little Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, at Ravenna; the decorations of the transept arches, the border atop of the wainscoting in the chapel and soffit of arch to chapel apse, is the same as the mosaic decorations in the apse of St. Vitale, Ravenna. They will find the same relief work, at Venice, Murano, Torcello, Cividale, Adria, Milan, Bologna, Ravenna, Rome and Monreale; that the white marble capitals of the chancel and side arches are faithful copies of those in St. Vitale and the Museum at Ravenna, also in San Marco.

SYMBOLISM.

✠

SOFFIT OF CHANCEL ARCH.

NOW as regards symbolism, for "Viva San Marco" is but a symbol, and it may be asked: Would you have us put up madonnas, saints, angels, over our doors and in our churches? (See Stones of Venice, vol. II., Muramo, paragraph § XL); and I would answer as Ruskin does, as a thing to be worshiped, *No*, but as a *symbol*, as an outward *sign* of a strong, deep, abiding, acknowledged religion, *governing, and a part of our daily life*, *Yes*—and that is why I believe in the use of it, for I can truly say, and so will every one who has studied and been impressed and influenced by the art of early Christian times, that the outward symbolism, call it what you may, and be it a sign of the cross, a pictured Madonna or saint, the art, the solemn and hallowed atmosphere of the churches and cathedrals of the old world, impress one, brings home with telling force and puts one in touch with the fact, that once there was a religion, deep, breathing, vital, all powerful—such as is not known in our time, and the old churches bear no uncertain stamp as being "our Lord's Temple."

II. It is often said that such symbolism is of Catholicism, and I most earnestly depricate all such ideas, in that symbolism was used in the early Christian churches, it is Catholic; but I am not aware that Jewish, Greek, Catholic, Episcopal or any other form of religious worship or church, has any prior or exclusive right to ART; in all its symbolism, in all its potentiality, to the sign of the cross in the church plan; to the chancel, apse, with its gathered choir in ranged seats, symbolizing the Holy of Holies of the structure, Christ the Teacher, and the heavenly choir of angels chanting, "Gloria in Excelsis Deo."

III. And I venture to say, if all the churches in America were emblazoned with and had for a part of their integral construction, more of the symbolism, which characterizes this First Congregational Church, that the children of the present day, would grow up with a deeper and more reverent feeling and conception of what a true religion really means.

ST. LUKE.

UNIV. OF MICH.

IV. It is with this view of the fitness of things that I have used symbolism, and have endeavored to erect a church building, which might bear, with no uncertain or compromising force, the expression and character of the purpose for which it has been erected — a church, "God's House" — nothing else (not a concert or lecture hall, as many of our churches, so-called, might be easily turned into, for all devotional expression they have), clear to the lowest intelligence, a place of quiet peace and communion for those who love the sanctuary.

CAPITAL TO ONE OF THE MAIN ARCH PIERS.

V. Nor do I claim for it architectural perfection but in so far as I have been able, all things considered, I have endeavored to give to it something of a reflex of the glorious old art of early Christian times, and, in so far as it is good, I here take the opportunity to beg of future generations, that they will let it stand for all time, neither destroying it, by reason of rise in land values, nor defacing it by restoration; let it become time worn and stained, for believe me, it will be more beautiful with the gray of age, than by acquaintance with the painter's pot.

SYMBOL MEANING.

✠

THE seven candlesticks, on chancel piers, stand for those St. John tells of in the Book of Revelation, and are like those brought from Jerusalem, and represented on the "Arch of Titus" in Rome; the palm branches symbolize Christ's entrance into Jerusalem; in ancient art the palm stands for the tree of life.

The Cross, Chiro, Alpha and Omega, and I. H. S. need no interpretation.

SHAFT OF LECTURN.

The Angel, Lion, Bull and Eagle, are the signs of the four Evangelists, and in ancient art are found, in place of the human head, on figures of the Evangelists.

The Peacocks and Chalice symbolize immortality: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life"—if there be peace on earth, there will be immortality.

Three Fishes — symbolizes Christ's good will towards men, in feeding the multitudes.

The Dove symbolizes the Holy Ghost when placed on the chancel arch; in other places, the attribute of love, also the soul.

The Shell is the symbol of baptism.

The Thirteen Stars—Christ and the twelve apostles.

The Wild Grape, charity.

The Heart, piety.

The Swords, zeal.

The Book, word of God—divine law.

The Eight Angels, the primal beatitudes or virtues, though I have taken them from the systim in the baptistry of San Marco, because of their Byzantine associations rather than from the fifth chapter of Matthew—the one includes the greater. They range as follows, though not placed in regular order: Humility, Mercy, Constancy, Charity, Hope, Faith, Justice, Fortitude.

CHAPEL INTERIOR.

UNIV. OF MICH.

The Lillies and Cornucopias emitting fire, on the transept arches, symbolize the resurrection; the Lillies, Easter morn; the Fire, renewed, eternal life.

The Evangelists--not "saints" of the church, these, but the four Gospels - the "word of God," the ministers of our faith.

John, the element of Revelation.

Luke, the element of thought, of contemplation.

Matthew, the element of teaching.

Mark, the element of record.

They are painted after the manner of the middle time of the Venetian school (1540 to 1600), and are worthy of Veronese and Tintoretto; indeed, I have seen nothing finer, more grand and beautiful, than the St. John, in all the length and breadth of Italy.

The Border of prismatic colors, round the Evangelists symbolizes God's "Bow of Promise."

II. The architect sincerely hopes that the funds will soon be forthcoming to have the bass-relief sculptured over the tower door. The subject, "On the way to Emmaus," seems to be specially appropriate to the place. "Abide with us, for it is towards evening and the day is far spent; and he went in to tarry with them." What more fitting subject could there be, to symbolize the calm, peaceful and hallowed refuge of the church, from all the toil and vexation, the weariness of life's pilgrimage; but it is one which *demands* a high order of artistic execution (as any mediocre attempt would simply be a farce), the face of Christ should express all that the subject implies; and so I earnestly urge that it will not be attempted till a competent sculptor can be engaged; and then leave the work to his time and loving execution. Such a man I have in mind, who will gladly undertake the work at a price most reasonable for the quality of his art.

III. The architect also hopes that the Loggia may be carved at no distant day, but the word carved does not fully express the quality of work which should be executed there: I would have the capitals to the columns bear a systim illustrating the attributes and virtues of the perfect life, opposed by the hostile vices, also the occupations of life of the present time,—the flora and cereals native to our country—so that some record of the time, life and actions may be left for generations yet unborn.

COLOR SYMBOLISM.

✠

AS hereinbefore stated, color is an essential and honored element in Byzantine art—Greek art. Without it, the old Byzantine churches would be like unto a symphony, without tone or harmony. Large space was given to color, both upon the exterior and interior. As Ruskin says, in relation to St. Mark's, unless one both cares for, loves and understands color, I protest against his forming any judgment of this First Congregational Church, for color is an accepted, honored and necessary element in its conception and completion. The structure was designed for color, and the color scheme is designed for the structure. And it has symbolism and has been used in that sense only,—only excepting such lines of color as are necessary, and used to contrast, individualize or harmonize primary colors in juxtaposition.

II. White signifies purity, innocence, virginity, faith, joy and life.

Red signifies divine love, the Holy Spirit, creative power.

Blue—heaven, truth, constancy, fidelity.

Gold—(yellow) the goodness of God, faith and fruitfulness.

Green—hope, immortality, victory.

Purple—(violet) love and truth, passion and suffering. It is the particular color worn by martyrs and the Mater Dolorosa.

These colors are all symbolical of devotional expression, and a church, in the true sense of the word, can as well do without color as it can do without hymns of praise or form of worship.

ST. MATTHEW.

UNIV. OF MICH.

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TEXTS.

✠

THE texts are as follows:

On chancel arch, "Behold, I am the resurrection and the life."

On transept arch (south) "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;" (reverse side), "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations."

Transept arch (north), "In him was life, and the life was the light of men"; (on reverse side), "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

Nave arch (west), "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you"; (reverse side), "I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

Organ arch, "Praise God in His Sanctuary."

Font arch, "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism."

On chancel windows (centre), "Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done."

(Left), "Thou shalt love the Lord, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul;" "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself; I am the Lord."

(Right), "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations," and "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh into the Father but by me."

In the chapel, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not;" "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

On the pulpit desk, Matthew, i: 1; Mark, i: 2; Luke, iv: 18; John, iii: 16.

CONCLUSION.

✠

THE author feels that he cannot close this sketch without acknowledging the unusually delightful association which it has been his good fortune to enjoy with the gentlemen constituting the committees having this work in charge. At the start, he was rather taken aback with the prospect of pleasing and harmonizing so many different minds, all having individuality and tenacity of thought—the author not lacking himself tenacity and loyalty to his pet ideas.

But without exception, while we have had differences of opinion, as individual men will have, our relations have been of the most pleasing and amicable nature. The committees, while not losing sight of their own position and responsibility, have not lost sight of the fact that the architect also has a position of authority and responsibility in his work, and that his ideas, architectural thoughts, the interest and loyalty to his design are entitled to respect. The architect, on his part, has endeavored to make all matters clear to their understanding, to always give good, intelligent and satisfactory reasons, for what he desired to carry out, to be careful in making his estimates and to keep within them.

And I can truly say, if all committees, who may have similar work in charge, for church work has its peculiar side and is of a different nature from other lines of professional work, would treat with their architect in a like spirit, they would secure better results; and professional life would indeed have its compensation, aside from fame or profit, for, after all, the professional man who is thoroughly devoted to his work, is sensitive to an unusual degree; has convictions

ST. MARK.

UNIV. OF MICH.

born of long and serious study in a given direction; is loyal to his ideals, and it hurts to have them pulled to pieces. And appreciation is the one thing best calculated to bring out most devoted service. The architect would also testify to the unusually satisfactory relation with the contractors of the building. They have executed his plans and followed his instructions, for good work and are entitled to credit for it.

The architect, and church also, is under special obligations to Miss Lyle Durgin, artiste of the four Evangelists, and to Mr. Albert Haberstroh, who has carried out the scheme of decoration. They have labored with unselfishness of purpose, a loyalty to art most commendable, and have left works which cannot be duplicated short of double the money paid. May their work stand, unaffected by retouching or restoration.

JOHN LYMAN FAXON.

"Abide with us"
"for it is toward eveing
and the day is for spent"

PROPOSED DESIGN FOR SCULPTURE OVER TOWER DOOR.

CONTRACTORS.

Architect—
John Lyman Faxon, . . . of Boston.

Masons' Work—
A. Chapoton, Jr., ... of Detroit.

Stone Work—
V. Campros, ... of Detroit.

Carpenter and Joiner Work—
Vinton & Co., ... of Detroit.

Plastering and Relief Work—
George Hanley, . . . of Detroit.

Carving and Modelling—
Wagner & Voelbracht, . . . of Detroit.

Marble Work and Carving—
Terrance Dunn, . . . of Boston.

Stained Glass—
Donald McDonald, . . . of Boston.

Artiste—
Miss Lyle Durgin, . . . of Boston.

Decorators—
L. Haberstroh & Son, . . . of Boston.

Tower Angel—
S. J. O'Kelly, Sculptor, . . of Boston.
W. H. Mullins, Maker, . . of Salem, Ohio.

Furniture—
Lawrence, Wild & Co., . . . of Boston.

Carpets—
Newcomb, Endicott & Co., . . of Detroit.

Gas Fixtures, etc.—
Shreve, Crump & Low Co., . of Boston.

Architect's Superintendent—
A. H. Nelson, ... of Boston.

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